

Name:

Date:

Class:

Book Group Options

Living with a Disability Unit

Introduction: For the next several weeks, we will be exploring our theme of *What do I stand for?* through the perspective of life with a disability. You will be working in groups, reading these books and discussing them in those groups. The book options listed below vary in style, point of view, and level of difficulty. Please read through these options, figure out which two options would be most enjoyable for you to read, and then discuss those choices with your parent or guardian. Your parent or guardian will need to approve your rankings by signing the form as well. In choosing a book, think about whether it seems interesting and whether it would fit your reading level -- the book should not be too easy or too hard. Please let me know if you need help making your selections. Though I make no guarantees, I will do my absolute best to get you one of your two options.

Option #1: *When I Was the Greatest* by Jason Reynolds

Ali is trying to live a normal life and stay out of trouble, which can be tough in his Bed Stuy neighborhood in New York City. A lot of people he knows are in gangs and/or sell drugs, but Ali keeps away from all of that, focusing instead on his school work, his passion for boxing, and his family. His best friend, Noodles, is very different. Noodles does not have a great home life, and he is hot-headed and quick to start stuff with people who get on his nerves. This sometimes hurts Noodles's ability to take care of his brother, Needles, who has a "syndrome" that causes him to blurt out all kinds of crazy things. The neighborhood doesn't really mind Needles, though. In fact, a lot of folks in the neighborhood like to look out for him, especially Ali and his mom. But when Noodles starts stuff with the wrong people, it can spell real trouble for the whole group, and Ali is not sure if he can clean up the mess Noodles made -- or if he even wants to try.

Option #2: *Rules* by Cynthia Lord

Catherine is twelve years old and desperate for a normal life. She has learned, however, that nothing is normal when you have a younger brother with autism. Everything in the family revolves around making her brother, David, from having one of his fits, so Catherine's needs always seem to take a back seat to David's. To help her avoid some embarrassment that David might cause, she is constantly teaching him all kinds of rules -- rules that seem obvious to most people, but that David can often forget, like keeping your pants on in public and "When someone says 'Hi,' you say 'hi' back." So when she starts making some promising new friends, Catherine is forced to look at her dream of a normal life and ask, "What is normal anyway?"

Option #3: *Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper

Melody is 13 years-old and is probably the smartest kid in her class, but nobody knows it. Why? Because Melody can't talk. She can't walk, either. Melody is in a wheelchair and has trouble communicating the most basic ideas and thoughts to her friends and family. It is as frustrating as it sounds -- especially when she is in remedial classes that teach her the alphabet over and over. But suddenly things seem to be getting better for Melody when a new device comes along that allows her to speak for the first time. Obviously, she is excited, but how will the people around her react when they see how smart she really is?

Option #4: TWO BOOKS -- *Wonderstruck* by Brian Selznik, and *El Deafo* by Cece Bell (student who choose this option will read *both* books)

Wonderstruck: This is a truly unique book in which two stories are told side-by-side, with one done with pictures and the other with words. Ben and Rose are both feeling like outcasts and they are searching for something that will give them a glimpse into their past so they can understand themselves in the present. Rose's story unfolds fifty years before Ben's, and yet they somehow intertwine. The journeys these two undertake are fascinating and exciting, and readers are left guessing not whether they will connect, but when and how.

El Deafo: Who is El Deafo? Why, it is none other than the childhood superhero alias of author Cece Bell. What are her powers? Hearing aids! Wait, hearing aids? Oh, yeah. Cece's hearing aids allow her to hear everything her teachers say -- even when they leave the microphone on when they go to the teachers' lounge or the bathroom. Living with hearing aids can be a challenge, and all Cece wants is to fit in at school. So if she uses the powers of her hearing aids properly, she just might get the life and friend that she is looking for. This memoir, told as a graphic novel, is funny and moving all at once.

Option #5: *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* by Mark Haddon

A lot of people who meet Christopher find him to be a peculiar kid. He does not seem to get jokes, hates it when people touch him, and he will sulk all day if he sees three yellow cars drive by in a row. Christopher loves and connects with animals, but he does not understand people. When a neighbor's dog is killed, and nobody seems interested in figuring out who did it, Christopher decides to conduct his own detective work to find the killer. The investigation and what he learns along the way -- not to mention the unique voice of Christopher -- make this an exceptional book. *It is also the most challenging of the book choices. Select this book if you want to push yourself.*

PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTICE: THIS BOOK CONTAINS SOME MILD ADULT REFERENCES AND SOME CURSING, INCLUDING USE OF THE "F" WORD. IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD READING THAT, PLEASE MAKE SURE S/HE DOES NOT SELECT IT AS ONE OF THE OPTIONS.

RANK YOUR CHOICES

Now, please fill this out to rank your **TOP TWO** choices. You **MUST USE A PEN** to fill out your choices. It may not be a pencil. I will do everything I can to make sure you get one of these two choices.

Your name: _____

Your class period: _____

What is your first choice? _____

What is your second choice? _____

PARENTS/GUARDIANS: Please sign below

By signing your name, you acknowledge that you have read the summaries of your child's book choices, and you approve of them. This includes the parent/guardian note at the end of Option #5.

Parent/guardian's signature _____